United Nations S/2018/1149

Security Council

Distr.: General
21 December 2018

Original: English

Report of the Secretary-General on Somalia

I. Introduction

1. The present report, submitted pursuant to paragraph 28 of Security Council resolutions 2408 (2018) and paragraph 55 of 2431 (2018), provides information on the implementation of those resolutions, including on the mandate of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM) and the United Nations Support Office in Somalia (UNSOS). The report covers major developments in Somalia during the period from 23 August to 13 December 2018.

II. Political, security and economic overview

2. The continuing standoff between the Federal Government and federal member states and the tensions emanating from the electoral process in South-West state dominated political developments during the reporting period. These tensions have slowed progress in the implementation of the political priorities, as well as the transition plan and the national security architecture, raising concerns that the gains realized so far could be in jeopardy. At the federal level, tensions unfolded between the legislative and the executive branches on 9 December when a group of 92 members of the House of the People submitted a motion to impeach President Mohammed Abdullahi "Farmajo" to the Office of the Speaker of the House. Civilian demonstrations took place in Mogadishu in support of President Farmajo and in Baidoa, South-West state, in favour of the motion. The validity of the motion was challenged amidst claims that some of the 92 signatures were forged.

3. On 8 September, at the third meeting of the Council of Interstate Cooperation in Kismaayo, the leaders of the five federal member states decided to suspend cooperation with the Federal Government, citing unfulfilled commitments and political interference. After a subsequent consultative meeting called by President Farmajo did not materialize, the Upper House offered to help mediate the dispute. On 24 September, President Mohamed Abdi Ware of HirShabelle broke ranks with his federal member state counterparts and restored cooperation with the Federal Government. At the fourth meeting of the Council on 24 October, the leaders of the federal member states, without HirShabelle, decided to create a political party and their own unified security force, while reiterating the suspension of their cooperation with the Federal Government, including on constitutional reform and preparations for the 2020 elections. However, during a visit by my Special Representative and the Special Representative of the Chairperson of the Commission of the African Union, Francisco Madeira, to each of the member state Presidents, they signalled their

Please recycle

willingness to reconcile with the Federal Government and encouraged the Upper House to continue mediation efforts. They called on the United Nations, the African Union Mission to Somalia (AMISOM) and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) to take an active role in finding a solution to the dispute. On 23 October, Prime Minister Hassan Ali Khaire established a six-member ministerial committee to work with the Upper House to end the stalemate.

4. Meanwhile, the South-West state presidential election, initially planned for 17 November, was delayed amidst allegations of interference and vote buying by the Federal Government, perceived manipulation by the administration of South-West state and controversy over the candidature of former Al-Shabaab deputy leader, Mukhtar Robow, which was strongly opposed by the Federal Government. These factors led to the resignation, on 5 November, of the 27-member Elections Committee of the South-West state Assembly. The President of South-West state, Sharif Hassan Sheikh Aden, also resigned on 7 November, dropping his re-election bid. A new 15-member Elections Committee registered six candidates, including Robow. Robow was arrested on 13 December in Baidoa, which prompted clashes between his supporters and security forces, as well as violent protests in town. On the same day, the South-West state electoral committee, which had approved Robow as an eligible candidate, publicly confirmed 19 December as the date for its presidential elections.

5. In Puntland, the selection process by traditional elders to determine the new membership of the Parliament is advancing. A seven-member vetting committee appointed by the President of Puntland, Abdiweli Mohamed Ali "Gaas", began operations to assess and endorse clan-nominated members of the Puntland Parliament. The clan leaders are to nominate 66 members of Parliament by 31 December, following which the Puntland Parliament will receive presidential candidacies and elect the president on 8 January 2019. UNSOM has joined civil society organizations and others in advocating for increased representation of women.

6. In Jubaland, the presidential election is due in August 2019, when the term of President Ahmed Mohamed Islam "Madobe" will end. Traditional elders plan to select new members of the regional assembly by April 2019; the new members will, in turn, elect a new President. Tensions related to these electoral processes, as well as allegations of interference by the Federal Government, are beginning to emerge. A perceived lack of support in the security sector and in resource-sharing was reported as one of the driving factors of demonstrations by civil society and local administration officials in Gedo from 24 August to 5 September. On 21 October, at the meeting of the Council of Interstate Cooperation in Garowe, the Jubaland President indicated that the elections would be held in accordance with the Jubaland constitution, while dismissing speculation that he intended to extend his term. On 13 November, he undertook to reshuffle his cabinet, changing seven positions, including one minister.

7. In Galmudug, the leadership remains deadlocked over implementation of the power-sharing agreement reached on 6 December 2017. In September, disagreement over the term of the current administration further deepened the rift, triggering a series of attempted impeachment and no-confidence motions against President Ahmed Duale Gelle "Haaf", Vice-President Mohamed Hashi Abdi "Arrabey", Speaker Ali Gaal Asir and First Deputy Speaker Hared Ali Hared by rival members of the Assembly. The election of a new Speaker in Dhusamareb on 9 October prompted a presidential election in Adado on 20 October. The group in Adado formed a parallel, unrecognized cabinet on 3 November. The legitimate administration, led by President "Haaf" continues to operate from the official state capital, Dhusamareb, while reconciliation efforts are under way.

8. In the context of the unfolding positive developments in the Horn of Africa subregion, the leaders of Eritrea, Ethiopia and Somalia concluded a two-day summit meeting in Ethiopia on 10 November. They stressed respect for the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of Somalia and reaffirmed their commitment to inclusive regional peace and cooperation. Djibouti, Ethiopia and Somalia welcomed the lifting of sanctions against Eritrea by the Security Council on 14 November.

9. On 27 October, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation Contact Group on Somalia held a ministerial level meeting in Mogadishu. The Group stressed the need to respect Somalia's unity and sovereignty, commended the agreements made by the Somali leaders in Baidoa in June 2018 and urged member States and financial institutions to increase their assistance to the Federal Government and vulnerable regions.

Security developments

10. The security situation in Somalia remains volatile, and Al-Shabaab remains the main threat to the country's security. There was also a spike in reported activities by pro-Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) elements in Mogadishu. In the disputed Sool region, tension continued in the town of Turkaraq and adjacent areas, with sporadic armed clashes between "Somaliland" and Puntland security forces. The highest number of terrorism incidents of the year were recorded in the month of November, with most cases reported in Mogadishu and in the Lower Shabelle and Hiraan regions.

11. Al-Shabaab continues to maintain its operational strength and capability, despite ongoing and intensified ground and air strikes across the country. Pro-ISIL elements have increased their activities in and around Mogadishu, although their operations remain limited to targeted killings. In Puntland, Al-Shabaab and pro-ISIL elements remain active. During the reporting period, reported assassinations by Al-Shabaab and pro-ISIL elements outnumbered improvised explosive device attacks in the same region. On 4 October, pro-ISIL elements claimed responsibility for killing Ethiopian migrants in Bosaso. There are also allegations of employees of Hormuud, a telecommunications company and Somalia's second largest employer, being assassinated in Mogadishu by pro-ISIL elements.

12. In Mogadishu, Al-Shabaab continued to carry out attacks and targeted assassinations through the use of vehicle-borne improvised explosive devices, under-vehicle improvised explosive devices and remote-controlled improvised explosive devices. In September and October, brief lulls in attacks were accompanied by an increase in general criminality in the capital.

13. On 2 September, a vehicle-borne improvised explosive device attack, allegedly targeting the compound of the District Commissioner in Howlwadaag District, killed four people and injured six children. On 1 October, a suicide vehicle-borne improvised explosive device hit an Italian military convoy of the European Union Training Mission in Somalia near the Ministry of Defence: three civilian bystanders were killed and 11 others injured. This was the first time Al-Shabaab had directly targeted an international military convoy not from AMISOM and could signal a shift in its tactics.

14. Security measures were heightened for the anniversary of the 14 October 2017 bombings in Mogadishu. No security incidents related to the anniversary were reported.

15. On 9 November, Al-Shabaab claimed responsibility for a complex attack against the Sahafi Hotel. Two vehicles with explosives detonated in front of the main entrance and a third exploded close to an adjacent hotel and a national intelligence and security agency checkpoint. Following the detonations, five attackers attempted to enter the

Sahafi Hotel compound, where an event was in progress involving numerous political officials: the attackers were killed before they were able to enter the compound. Over 50 people, including seven Al-Shabaab militants, were killed in the attack.

16. The Lower and Middle Shabelle regions continued to record the highest levels of Al-Shabaab activity in the country, including improvised explosive devices as well as remote-controlled improvised explosive devices and armed attacks on AMISOM and Somali National Army security convoys and personnel. The Middle Juba, Lower Jub, Gedo, Hiran and Bay regions also reported activity by Al-Shabaab, although to a lesser extent.

17. Tensions continued in the run-up to the South West state presidential election. After the arrest of Mukhtar Robow on 13 December, demonstrations erupted throughout Baidoa, with protesters burning tires and erecting roadblocks. Although Somali security forces dispersed the protesters, a total of 15 civilians, including a state Assembly Member, were killed in the confrontations. Large numbers of AMISOM forces were deployed in the town.

18. On 13 October, two suicide bombers targeted a restaurant and a hotel in Baidoa, killing more than 20 people and injuring 50. Al-Shabaab claimed responsibility. On 3 November, eight armed men in civilian attire claiming to be police, including militiamen travelling in a truck, attacked a United Nations convoy on a mission to Dhusamareb. The members of the convoy were not hurt, and no United Nations vehicles were damaged.

19. In a significant incident, on 25 August, the crew of a United Nations aircraft found a bullet hole in the port side inboard engine after landing in Baidoa. It was the first time that such an incident was reported, raising the level of concerns about aviation safety across Somali airspace.

20. On 16 October, private security aboard a Hong Kong-flagged cargo vessel foiled an attempted piracy attack some 340 nautical miles off the coast of the Bari region. This was the first major attack since February 2018.

Economic developments

21. Somalia's economy continued to recover from the drought of 2016–2017. Growth in real gross domestic product (GDP) was projected to increase to 3.1 per cent (2018) from 2.3 per cent (2017), supported by recovering agricultural production, consolidation of peace and security, gradual increases in private investment and donor inflows.

22. Economic growth remains too low, however, to improve the lives of most Somalis. According to the third economic update report of the World Bank, published on 13 September, real GDP growth averaged 2.5 per cent in the period from 2013 to 2017, while the population expanded by 2.9 per cent, resulting in a negative GDP per capita growth of minus 0.3 per cent annually. The economy failed to create sufficient opportunities, particularly for women and young people. As at the end of the reporting period, labour force participation among men was 58 per cent, compared to 37 per cent among women. Nearly one in three Somalis faces conditions of extreme poverty. Regional disparities are large, with the highest rate of poverty affecting internally displaced persons, people in rural communities and nomadic populations.

23. In September, a review by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) concluded that sufficient progress had been made towards the benchmarks required in order for Somalia to obtain debt relief under the Fund's Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiative. In recognition of the country's significant progress, the World Bank's 2019–2022 country partnership framework unlocked exceptional financing from the International Development Association through pre-arrears clearance grants aimed at

strengthening basic service delivery, improving financial management capabilities and restoring economic resilience and opportunities.

24. Implementation of fiscal policy improved over the reporting period, with domestic revenue collection reaching 72 per cent of the budget target by August 2018. This was driven by a broadening of the tax base, including: a new sales tax on goods and services; enhanced compliance resulting from the operationalization of the large-and-medium-taxpayers' office established in June 2018; and improved collection capacity, which has increased non-tax revenue. The cabinet approved the budget of the Federal Government for 2019 ($340 million), 56 per cent of which will come from domestic revenue, while the other 44 per cent will come from donors. The Federal Government's budget for the closing fiscal year was $274.6 million.

III. Support for peacebuilding and state-building efforts

A. Establishment of a functional federal state

Deepening federalism

25. The political stalemate between the Federal Government and the federal member states is impeding progress on key issues related to the definition of Somalia's federal model, including the allocation of powers between the Federal Government and the federal member states, the federal justice model and fiscal federalism. My Special Representative and other international partners have engaged in discussions with leaders of the Federal Government and the federal member states to encourage them to continue essential work at the technical level, particularly through the Federalization Negotiation Technical Committee, pending the resolution of the political standoff between the leaders. In a positive development, some technical level cooperation has continued under the comprehensive approach to security strands, as well as the review of the Provisional Federal Constitution and preparations for the 2020 elections. On 12 and 13 December, in Mogadishu, members of the Federalization Negotiation Technical Committee, the Ministry of Constitutional Affairs and the Ministry of Finance, among others, convened to discuss options on fiscal federalism.

26. Discussion of Mogadishu's boundaries took place on 29 September between the Mayor of Mogadishu/Governor of Benaadir Regional Administration, Abdirahman Omar Osman "Yariisow", and representatives of the National Independent Boundaries and Federalism Commission. The Mayor proposed the expansion of Mogadishu's current boundaries, which prompted an official reaction from HirShabelle to the effect that that any expansion into the Balad district in HirShabelle would "violate the HirShabelle constitution".

Constitutional review

27. Priority issues in reviewing the Federal Constitution include the allocation of powers and resource-sharing, the system of governance, the status of Mogadishu and the justice model. At the high-level meeting on the road map on inclusive politics convened by Prime Minister Khaire on 1 October, it was noted that federal member states had continued collaboration at the technical level with the Federal Government on key constitutional issues. The aim was to prepare the ground for decision-making at the leadership level in the National Security Council, especially on the allocation of powers and the justice model. However, despite some limited efforts by President Farmajo to reach out to the leaders of the federal member states, no National Security Council meeting was held during the reporting period to enable the necessary political decisions.

28. Regular joint meetings between the Ministry of Constitutional Affairs, the Parliamentary Oversight Committee and the Constitutional Review and Oversight Commission contributed to improved cooperation and communication, as well as to improved synergy between the key mandated constitutional players. The bodies completed a technical review of the first five chapters of the Provisional Constitution and held consultations in Garowe between 9 between 11 October, which brought together regional actors from the federal member states.

Prevention and resolution of conflicts

29. As part of his good offices mandate, my Special Representative explored with President Farmajo and "Somaliland" President Muse Bihi Abdi the possibility of reviving the Somalia-"Somaliland" dialogue. He also held discussions with Federal Government leadership and all Presidents of the federal member states and underscored the need to break the political stalemate between the two sides, stressing that continued progress on Somalia's state-building and security priorities required the Federal Government and the federal member states to work together. Three parallel avenues for resolving the impasse were discussed, including continuation of the technical level work; pursuing the mediation efforts in the Upper House of Parliament; and accepting President Farmajo's offer of direct talks. Given the implications of the stalemate in the joint security operations to further degrade Al-Shabaab and the implementation of the transition plan, my Special Representative invited the Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission to join him in his discussions in the capitals of the federal member states.

30. Regarding the wider national reconciliation agenda, the Ministry of the Interior, Federal Affairs and Reconciliation held the first round of consultative meetings on 25 and 26 September to develop the national reconciliation framework; the meeting was attended by members of both Houses of Parliament. Consultative meetings were also held in all federal member states in October and November, with the participation of approximately 700 individuals from civil society and government from across Somalia. National reconciliation also gained visibility among the international community with the initiation of the "group of friends of reconciliation" in Nairobi on 16 October. Launched in May 2018, the ambassadorial-level group is made up of representatives of 10 Member States, as well as representatives of the European Union and UNSOM, which supports the Somali-led and owned process.

31. During the reporting period, UNSOM continued to engage in conflict prevention efforts. In addition to the electoral process in South-West state and ongoing support to sustain peace in Galkayo, UNSOM actively engaged with Puntland and "Somaliland" authorities on preventive efforts in peacebuilding and sustaining peace. In the Tukaraq area of the disputed Sool region, my Deputy Special Representative and the IGAD Special Envoy for Somalia led several joint United Nations-IGAD visits to Garoowe and Hargeisa, where they discussed arrangements for a cessation of hostilities and advocated for negotiations to secure a durable, peaceful solution.

32. Efforts continued to implement the UNSOM mediation-support and capacity-building strategy initiated in December 2017. With the support of the European Union, IGAD, the Mediation Support Unit of the Department of Political Affairs and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), UNSOM organized a three-day workshop on mediation and dialogue facilitation. International and national staff from AMISOM, the European Union Capacity-Building Mission in Somalia, the European Union Training Mission in Somalia, United Nations agencies and UNSOM acquired basic mediation skills and shared best practices on how to address conflicts in Somalia, including land disputes, and on how to work with traditional Somali conflict-resolution mechanisms.

Support for universal elections

33. Progress was made in translating the political agreement on the electoral model reached by the National Security Council in Baidoa in June 2018 into a legislative text. On 11 November, the Ministry of Interior, Federal Affairs and Reconciliation presented the draft electoral law to the Council of Ministers for discussion, prior to its submission to the Federal Parliament The law is expected to provide the legal basis for universal multi-party elections by the end of 2020. The proposed electoral model is based on the principle of proportional representation and a closed party list system. The ability to maintain the electoral timeline is dependent on the timeline for passing and implementing the electoral law. Delays in the submission of the draft electoral law to Parliament have negated the possibility of the law being adopted, in line with the Government's commitment, by the end of 2018. There is concern that these delays could negatively impact the electoral process and the support provided by partners.

34. In September, as a first step in identifying future voter registration centres, the National Independent Electoral Commission completed a study to map out potential voter catchment areas. Following a field verification operation by the Commission, the study could justify the establishment of voter registration centres. In October, a pilot project was conducted in two districts (Wadajir district in Mogadishu and Jowhar in the Middle Shabelle region) to verify the mapping exercise and identify suitable locations.

35. In October, the National Independent Electoral Commission held back-to-back workshops on institutional governance and the review of its strategic plan in order to enhance its technical and operational capacity and remain on track in the preparations for the elections in 2020. The Commission also recruited its first batch of field electoral officers as part of its ongoing establishment of subnational offices.

B. Cross-cutting issues

Gender equality and women's empowerment

36. On 28 October, my Special Representative convened a meeting with 35 women leaders representing civil society, federal parliamentarians, academia, businesswomen, journalists, the National Independent Electoral Commission, refugees and persons with disability. The meeting served as a stocktaking of key issues, concerns and priorities of Somali women and an assurance of the continued support of the United Nations for women's rights and for their participation in the political process.

37. UNSOM and UNDP continued to provide technical support to the Somali National Women's Organization and the coordination office on preventing and countering violent extremism in the Office of the Prime Minister. The support aimed at preparing for the Benaadir consultation on women's enhanced participation in peace, reconciliation and preventing and countering violent extremism and the first Somali Women's Peace Forum, held on 28 and 29 November. In the aftermath of the attack in Mogadishu in October 2017, the Women's Organization, concluding that women's enhanced role and engagement in peace, reconciliation and preventing and countering violent extremism was crucial to the establishment of sustained peace, undertook State-level consultations on women's enhanced role, engagement and participation in these key areas. Over 200 women representations, including 55 women leaders from five federal member states attended the Forum.

38. On 24 October, members of two women caucuses from both houses of the Federal Parliament scheduled the second annual conference for women Members of Parliament (representatives of federal and state assemblies) from 3 to 5 December in

Mogadishu. The constitutional review and universal suffrage elections were among the key priorities discussed during the conference.

Youth empowerment

39. The United Nations supported the joint Galkayo youth committee in hosting International Peace Day celebrations in Galkayo from 21 to 23 September. Over 300 youth from north and south Galkayo engaged in discussions, sports and other activities. Youth representatives from all federal member states, elders, women, local and regional authorities from Puntland and Galmudug and Federal Government representatives also attended. The celebrations were presented as a best-practice at a youth, peace and security forum held in Sandö, Sweden, from 5 to 7 December. In Kismaayo, the Peace Committee gathered 700 youth, women, and elders for discussion and a subsequent march to the Presidential Palace.

40. The Somali National Youth Council, with United Nations support, hosted three regional consultations with regional umbrella youth associations in Garowe, Adado and Beledweyne. The United Nations Population Fund and the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) supported the establishment of district youth councils in Baidoa, Dollow and Kismaayo to serve as mechanisms to promote youth participation in local governance.

C. Development coordination

41. Despite the stalemate between the Federal Government and the federal member states, development coordination activities under the Somalia Development and Reconstruction Facility continued throughout the reporting period, although some members did not attend.

42. The final version of the recovery and resilience framework was completed in October, with a focus on implementation of resilience-building activities. A programmatic platform for the framework is due to be launched in January. Agreement was reached on the need to initiate mutually reinforcing humanitarian and development interventions. In close consultation with the Government, the United Nations agreed to support the design of a joint programme focused on systemic and structural resilience, providing the opportunity for donors to contribute funding to resilience-building activities outside the scope of the humanitarian response plan. This reflects the reality of the development, humanitarian and peacebuilding nexus in Somalia.

43. The prioritization afforded to durable solutions in the national development plan is also reflected in the recovery and resilience framework, thanks to continued technical support. In this regard, the establishment of a specific sub-working group on migration, displacement and durable solutions contributed, through its activities, to an increase in the funding available for programming activities to address the need for critical durable solutions.

44. The Federal Government led a review process aiming to adapt structures, strategies and priorities to the new and evolving context in Somalia. The Government also initiated a review of the national development plan, which allowed stakeholders to review progress and realign strategies and priorities based on emerging needs. In addition, work was started on the next development plan, which is being designed to meet the criteria for an interim poverty reduction strategy paper.

45. As a result of a series of meetings held during the reporting period, adjustments were made to a number of benchmarks, targets and partnership principles in the mutual accountability framework agreed to in December 2017.

46. The United Nations and development partners agreed on a new multi-year support package to enhance Government-led aid coordination. The project contributes to the implementation of the New Partnership for Somalia and the national development plan through strengthening national capacities for effective aid management and coordination.

IV. Comprehensive approach to security

A. International coordination

47. The strands of the comprehensive approach to security are focused on supporting the implementation of the transition plan and the national security architecture, as well as wider stabilization and the national strategy for preventing and countering violent extremism. The Federal Government is also planning an internal review to strengthen the role of the four strands of the comprehensive approach in leading reform efforts in the security and justice sectors. However, the ongoing political tensions between the Federal Government and federal member states continues to impede further progress on a range of reform issues, including the next steps in the implementation of the national security architecture and the transition plan.

B. Strands of the comprehensive approach to security

1. Strand 1: enabling AMISOM operations and enhancing AMISOM effectiveness

48. UNSOS continues to provide logistical support to 21,626 uniformed and 70 civilian AMISOM personnel deployed in 78 locations in southern Somalia. On 10 October, representatives of the Mission hosted a meeting on enabling its operations and enhancing its effectiveness, at which they reiterated the AMISOM commitment to the transition plan and also stressed the need to generate adequate capabilities on the part of the Somali security forces in order to enable them to ultimately take over the Mission's responsibilities.

49. An operational readiness assessment of AMISOM military, police and civilian components, including field visits conducted between 16 August and 3 September to Mission locations, was completed during the reporting period. The assessment was carried out by the African Union, with participation from United Nations Headquarters, AMISOM, UNSOS, UNSOM, the United Nations Office to the African Union, the United Nations Mine Action Service and other key partners.

50. The African Union, in consultation with UNSOS, completed an assessment report on AMISOM military aviation requirements, which was shared with UNSOS on 18 September. The report recommends, inter alia, that AMISOM develop an aviation operational concept and strengthen its military aviation management procedures. It also recommended that the Mission be provided with military utility helicopters and unmanned aerial surveillance systems. Limited use of the main supply routes by AMISOM and the inability to deliver support by road remains a challenge. UNSOS continues to deliver essential life support to AMISOM forward locations using its helicopters and barge services, with significant cost implications. UNSOM, UNSOS and AMISOM also started the implementation of the risk mitigation measures set out in the human rights due diligence policy on United Nations support to non-United Nations security forces.

51. From 28 October to 4 November, the African Union organized a workshop in Nairobi to review the AMISOM concept of operations and to revise it for the 2018–2021 period.

52. All the troop and police contributing countries, apart from Sierra Leone, have signed the tripartite memorandum of understanding for contingent-owned equipment and self-sustainment. United Nations Headquarters is in the process of negotiating the tripartite memorandum of understanding for Sierra Leone's recently deployed formed police unit. Pursuant to the signing of the tripartite memorandum, claims submitted by Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda are currently being processed at United Nations Headquarters.

53. UNSOS continues to support the transition plan as well as the joint AMISOM-Somali National Army plan for securing the Mogadishu-Baidoa main supply route and the recovery of the town of Leego. UNSOS also supported the relocation of AMISOM from the Mogadishu Stadium and provided accommodation at the Al-Jazeera II camp for 312 Ugandan troops and 160 Nigerian and 160 Ugandan formed police units.

54. UNSOS continued to provide non-lethal logistical support to 10,900 soldiers of the Somali National Army deployed in 22 locations who participate in joint operations with AMISOM. The Federal Government and AMISOM have not requested any changes to this support, pursuant to operational paragraph 45 of Security Council resolution 2431 (2018).

55. The United Nations Mine Action Service has trained 2,821 AMISOM troops in improvised explosive device search capacity, threat mitigation and explosive ordnance disposal. It has also provided canine teams to AMISOM to search vehicles, luggage and infrastructure. During the reporting period, twenty-three improvised explosive devices were safely identified along the main supply routes, of which 14 were destroyed by AMISOM teams trained by the Mine Action Service.

56. An independent review of UNSOS was conducted in August 2018. The review reiterated the role of UNSOS as a strategic enabler for its core clients, AMISOM and UNSOM, and identified challenges to be addressed jointly. The report also made recommendations on how UNSOS, UNSOM and AMISOM can strengthen collective efforts to enable progress in Somalia.

2. Strand 2: strengthening Somali security institutions

57. The Federal Government continued to implement recommendations from the Somali National Army operational readiness assessment, including the rollout of biometric registration and the rewriting of the Somali National Army code of conduct. UNSOM and AMISOM started to develop a joint security sector reform strategy to leverage their respective comparative advantages in support of the national security architecture agreement and the transition plan.

58. On 29 and 30 October, the Maritime Security Coordination Committee brought together representatives of the Federal Government, federal member states, "Somaliland" and international partners to discuss progress in the implementation of the Somali Maritime Resource and Security Strategy, upcoming priorities and the way forward in order to improve reporting, monitoring and evaluation mechanisms. Representatives of the federal member states expressed concern with the limited international donor support provided to maritime capacity-building activities at the state level.

59. The UNSOM-UNDP integrated security sector reform section supported parliamentary public consultations towards the passage of the law reviewing the pensions and gratuities for members of the Somali National Army and security

services. Support was also provided to nationally-led coordination structures to implement the new policing model, including the drafting of the federal police plan. Phase 2 of the operational readiness assessment, a critical foundation for integrating (non-state) regional forces under the national security architecture, was completed in Galmudug, Jubaland and South-West state and will continue in Puntland and HirShabelle. The operational readiness assessment will also contribute to the ability of the Federal Government to make decisions with regard to the integration of regional forces into the Somali National Army and police.

60. In August, the President removed five Supreme Court judges by decree. As the judicial services commission had not been established, the President's decision was criticized as undermining the independence of the judiciary. In October, the Council of Interstate Cooperation warned the Federal Government against unilaterally constituting the judicial services commission. It also stated that all previous agreements with the Federal Government would no longer be recognized. This might affect the approval of the justice and corrections model.

61. Through the joint police programme, funding continued to be provided for: the training of 600 new police recruits and the construction of police stations, as well as payment of police stipends in Jubaland; training of 400 new police recruits, as well as the provision of vehicles and stipends in respect of security transition in South-West state; training and stipends for 700 police officers and payment of stipends in Galmudug; training of 400 police recruits in HirShabelle; establishment of an electronic payroll system in Puntland; construction of headquarters for a criminal investigation department; and the renovation of a police station and the provision of vehicles and communication equipment to support security transition in the vicinity of the Mogadishu Stadium.

62. The United Nations Mine Action Service trained community-based clearance teams carried out activities in 84 communities, verified a 588,742 square meter area and safely removed 478 remnants of war. The Service also deployed community liaison officers across liberated districts and delivered explosive hazard risk education to 7,683 local community members. Seventy-two per cent of the beneficiaries of the latter programme were children.

63. In addition, the Mine Action Service accessed a domestic stockpile in South Galkayo, Mudug region, recovering and destroying 271 remnants of war in November. At the federal level, some 18,000 weapons were marked and registered.

3. Strand 3: stabilization, community recovery and the extension of state authority and accountability

64. On 4 October, the Federal Government approved the updated stabilization strategy presented by Ministry of Interior, Federal Affairs and Reconciliation. The strategy reflects progress on the transition plan process and the broader commitment to a whole-of-government approach on stabilization. On 26 November, the state stabilization plans developed to support the implementation of the strategy were circulated at the national stabilization meeting.

65. The Ministry of the Interior Federal Affairs and Reconciliation, together with stabilization partners, continued to support the implementation of the transition plan. The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the United Kingdom, through its early recovery initiative, developed community-level research along the Baidoa to Mogadishu corridor to assist the planning of stabilization initiatives in Wanlaweyn, Leego and Burhakaba. USAID is also supporting the expansion of local radio coverage to broadcast pro-Government messaging in those areas. The USAID transition initiatives for stabilization programme also completed 20 infrastructure projects across the country, including: five roads, five sports

facilities, four government administration complexes, two airstrips, a women's centre, a women's market and a community centre. The Banadir regional administration continued to lead efforts to rehabilitate the Mogadishu Stadium with the assistance of the Nordic International Support Foundation, including support from the Government of Norway and the European Union.

4. Strand 4: preventing and countering violent extremism

66. During the reporting period, the office of the Prime Minister and the United Nations agreed on a project for operationalizing the Somali national strategy and action plan for preventing and countering violent extremism. The project will assist the Government in operationalizing and staffing its coordination mechanism at the federal and subfederal levels. The project will also provide operational support for the coordination of efforts to prevent and counter violent extremism, including the holding of regular coordination meetings, the provision of training and technical assistance activities and the promotion of links between Somali and related regional initiatives.

67. On 28 and 29 August, United Nations regional offices in Amman and Addis Ababa deployed a team of experts to enhance synergies on preventing and countering violent extremism between the United Nations, the activities set out in the Somali national strategy and action plan and the United Nations regional programme. The regional programme will share global best practices with Somali stakeholders to boost innovation and commence cross-sectoral programme development in this field.

68. Ongoing support for the national programme for the treatment and handling of disengaged combatants continued during the reporting period, with UNSOM facilitating coordination mechanisms while focusing on the harmonization of interventions and the consolidation of standard operating procedures. By the end of the reporting period, the three rehabilitation centres for low-risk Al-Shabaab defectors were housing and providing support for 69 defectors in Mogadishu, 123 in Baidoa and 151 in Kismaayo.

69. Phase three of the Baidoa high-risk prisoner rehabilitation project is under way, with support from the Government of Sweden. The project focuses on the reintegration of former Al-Shabaab prisoners into the community, and includes significant upgrades to the infrastructure of the Baidoa prison.

C. Transition planning

70. The handover of Mogadishu Stadium, the first of the initial priority locations for the transition plan, commenced at the end of August, including the transfer of security control from AMISOM to the Somali Police Force. Since then, renovation work has begun to restore the site as a sporting venue. Planning for the main supply route between Baidoa and Mogadishu has been slowed owing to the ongoing political impasse between the Federal Government and the federal member states. The main supply routes in HirShabelle will be the next priorities for transition planning and implementation.

V. Human rights and protection

A. Human rights

71. Freedom of expression violations continued, with two arbitrary arrests and the killing of two journalists. One journalist (in Galkayo) and a cameraman (in

"Somaliland") were beaten by police; a journalist received death threats in Mogadishu; and one media outlet was closed. One newspaper resumed operations after being suspended in 2014.

72. While civilian casualties increased, there were over 260 abductions attributed to Al-Shabaab. Prolonged detention without judicial review, mostly of suspected Al-Shabaab members, continued, mainly in Puntland.

73. During the reporting period, six civilians were killed and seven injured in airstrikes by unidentified aircraft in Middle Juba. A civilian was reportedly killed by AMISOM in Lower Juba and four others were reported to have been killed in Mogadishu. A total of 11 cases of sexual violence were recorded during the reporting period; this figure cannot be considered exhaustive due to underreporting and lack of access due to security constraints. Sixteen death sentences were pronounced, with four executions carried out following violations of due process rights.

74. On 2 October, Somalia signed the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

B. Compliance with the human rights due diligence policy

75. The United Nations Human Rights Due Diligence Policy Task Force revised its standard operating procedures on the implementation of the due diligence policy, including clarifications on the obligations and requirements of United Nations agencies, funds and programmes and the process to suspend or withdraw support. The AMISOM/United Nations technical working group on the due diligence policy continued to review the status and implementation of measures to prevent and respond to violations. UNSOM held a training session for staff of the United Nations Mine Action Service and AMISOM mentors to familiarize them with relevant prevention measures and how to support the implementation of the policy. UNSOM facilitated sessions for the humanitarian country team during a workshop on the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse. In this regard, it was noted that an adequate referral pathway for allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse by AMISOM personnel within the humanitarian country team-prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse mechanism is needed. UNSOM briefed the policy advisory group of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) on the strategic use of the due diligence policy in Somalia. OHCHR will follow up on the issues raised as part of the outcome of the 2018 review of the policy. AMISOM and the Federal Government issued separate press statements informing the public that allegations against troops involving the death of four civilians on 6 November in Mogadishu are being investigated.

C. Children in armed conflict

76. During the period, the country task force on monitoring and reporting documented and verified 1,020 grave violations affecting 995 children, including 581 boys and 214 girls. This represents a decrease in both the number of violations and children affected, compared to 1,426 grave violations affecting 1,239 children reported in the previous period. Violations included 322 cases of abduction, 308 cases of recruitment and use of children, 167 cases of children injured, 116 cases of killing and 82 cases of sexual violence. The task force verified 16 cases of attacks against schools, six attacks against hospitals and three cases of denial of humanitarian access. Sixty-nine percent of all violations were attributed to Al-Shabaab.

77. On 20 August, after sustained advocacy by the United Nations, the President of Puntland signed a decree to pardon 34 children who had been sentenced to various prison terms for their association with Al-Shabaab in Garowe since 2016. On 24 November, the children were transferred from Puntland to a rehabilitation centre in Mogadishu, where they are currently awaiting to be reunited with their families.

D. Prevention of sexual violence

78. The sexual offences bill, passed by the Federal Government Council of Ministers on 30 May, continues to face opposition, mainly from Somali religious leaders, who argue that it violates sharia law. The religious leaders have called on Somalis to oppose the Federal Parliament's enactment of the bill. Al-Shabaab is leveraging the criticism by publicising the bill and urging Somalis to join the group to fight the initiative. The bill will strengthen the legal framework for addressing sexual violence and will make provisions for services to survivors of sexual violence.

VI. Humanitarian situation

79. The food security situation continued to improve thanks to above-average rainfall during the *Gu* season (March–June) in 2018 and sustained humanitarian assistance. Nevertheless, 4.2 million people require humanitarian assistance (including 2.7 million children) and the level of humanitarian needs remains above pre-drought crisis levels. The improvement in food security remains largely dependent on the performance of seasonal rains. In addition, over 1.5 million people face crisis or emergency levels of food insecurity and require urgent life-saving assistance. Around 190,000 individuals were newly displaced from August to October 2018, mostly due to conflict and insecurity, bringing the number of newly displaced from January to the end of October to 831,000. As at the end of the reporting period, a total of 2.65 million individuals are internally displaced.

80. High malnutrition rates prevail, especially among the internally displaced population. The nutritional status of children under the age of five has not improved, with nearly one million children at risk of malnutrition, including over 170,000 children facing severe acute malnutrition. The limited access to public health and nutrition services, largely due to the lack of sustainable funding, continues to be a concern.

81. Populations in rural areas and in urban internally displaced persons sites continue to live in the most vulnerable circumstances. The extent of livelihood losses and debt incurred over multiple seasons of severe drought have left rural communities with limited means to recover, and highly vulnerable to future shocks. Internally displaced persons account for 58 per cent of those who face crisis or emergency levels of food insecurity, and malnutrition rates among internally displaced children are particularly high. Furthermore, a spike in forced evictions is aggravating the vulnerability of these populations. Between January and October, over 235,000 internally displaced persons were evicted country-wide, which is more than the number of people evicted in 2017. The highest number of evictions were reported in Mogadishu and Baidoa.

82. The humanitarian needs overview process commenced in September with a series of consultations with authorities, affected communities and humanitarian partners across Somalia. An estimated 4.2 million people will require humanitarian assistance in 2019. The reduction in needs compared to 2017 reflects both an improvement in the overall humanitarian situation and a more focused approach to defining needs. Nonetheless, humanitarian needs remain significantly high, and the

is chronic vulnerability among some groups, in particular internally displaced persons in urban situations, people in rural communities and children.

83. By 26 November, the Somalia humanitarian response plan had received $839 million in donations. Combined with the approximately $234 million received for activities outside the plan, the Somali operation has received $1.07 billion in donor contributions. Sustained and early financial support will be required in 2019 to ensure the continuation of life-saving aid and to keep many affected communities on the path to recovery. Contrary to the average-to-above-average projections for *Deyr* rainy season (September–December), the rainfall was below average across most of Somalia until the end of November, with particularly significant rainfall deficit in Puntland.

84. The operating environment continues to be challenging. So far in 2018, over 110 violent incidents have impacted humanitarian organizations, accounting for the death of nine humanitarian workers, the injury of 13, the abduction of 18 and the arrest and temporary detention of 17. Nearly 100 administrative impediments have affected programming and advocacy efforts with the authorities to establish a centralized regulatory framework for non-governmental organizations. Road access challenges continue to mount along main supply routes. International non-governmental organizations are preparing to relocate their operations from Kenya to Somalia in response to the directive of the Federal Government for them to do so by the end of 2018.

85. After Mogadishu became the first African city to sign the Cities #WithRefugees initiative on 20 June: Berbera, Bosaso and Hargeisa followed suit in October. Through the initiative, which was launched on World Refugee Day, cities and local authorities across the globe who are working to promote inclusion, support refugees and bring communities together were invited to sign a statement of solidarity.

86. The humanitarian needs overview process commenced in September with a series of consultations with authorities, affected communities and humanitarian partners across Somalia. The reduction in projected needs for 2019 compared to 2018 reflects an improvement in the overall humanitarian situation and a more focused approach to defining needs. The 2019 global humanitarian overview was launched on 4 December 2018.

VII. United Nations presence in Somalia

87. United Nations entities continue to be present in the following locations in Somalia: Baidoa, Beletweyne, Bosaso, Dhobley, Dollow, Galkayo, Garowe, Hargeisa, Kismaayo and Mogadishu. Efforts to relocate the United Nations presence in HirShabelle state from Beletweyne to Jowhar are ongoing, but security conditions and poor road conditions continue to hamper the move. Important progress was made on the establishment of the United Nations office in Dhusamareb. As of December 2018, there were 674 international and 1,288 national staff deployed throughout Somalia.

88. The imposition of taxes and other fees on United Nations personnel, consultants and contractors is having an adverse impact on the United Nations presence and its ability to deliver on its mandate, including UNSOS delivery of support to AMISOM and the Somalia National Army. Such actions are contrary to the status-of-mission agreement concluded between the Federal Government and the United Nations in 2014.

VIII. Observations

89. In my previous report (S/2018/800), I indicated that the resolution of the parliamentary crisis in May could allow constructive political dialogue and progress

in the implementation of the political road map, particularly in relation to the finalization of the political agreements required to define Somalia's federal model. However, the political stalemate of recent months has impaired the expected progress. With the Federal Government and the federal member states now preoccupied with the electoral processes within the federal member states, the risk of an extended blockage is high. This could jeopardize not only the timelines for the 2020 elections, but also the overall gains made to date. I therefore call on Somalia's leaders, at the Federal and subfederal levels, to put the national interest first and resolve their differences without further delay. I remain optimistic that reconciliation among the leaders is possible, as demonstrated by their past political maturity and their determination to make progress.

90. Even while political progress at the level of principals has been disappointing, the ongoing development of legislative and institutional frameworks at a technical level and cooperation between the Federal Government and the federal member states are encouraging. This should lay the ground for the necessary political agreements when the National Security Council resumes its work. Adoption of an electoral law that has the support of all key stakeholders, including the federal member states, by the end of this year is now unlikely. Its absence will seriously endanger the electoral calendar.

91. The success of the electoral processes currently under way in the federal member states will serve as benchmarks for the 2020 national elections. It is therefore important to protect the integrity and credibility of these electoral processes by ensuring respect for the implementing institutions, as well as the rules established by these institutions, and by conducting the electoral processes in a climate free of violence, manipulation and corruption.

92. The effective and timely implementation of the transition plan and the national security architecture, including the integration of regional security forces and the right-sizing of the national security forces, is critical for Somalia's overall progress. I commend the Federal Government for assuming ownership of the key processes and leadership in setting the priorities. The political impasse between the Federal Government and the federal member states and distractions caused by elections-related politics should not be allowed to stall progress on security. Close coordination with international partners who are investing in the capacity-building of the security sector, including with AMISOM and its police- and troop-contributing countries, is essential for the successful implementation of both the transition plan and the national security architecture. In addition, a comprehensive approach, which ensures that operations are underpinned by accelerated capacity-building for the Somali security institutions in order to assist them in holding onto recovered areas and undertaking stabilization activities to prevent and counter violent extremism, should be maintained to ensure the sustainability of the transition process. The role of the comprehensive approach to security strands and the comprehensive approach to security Executive Group, led by Prime Minister Khaire, is critical in ensuring the preservation of this approach.

93. The role of AMISOM remains essential throughout the transition period and in the run up to and during the 2020 elections. I welcome the AMISOM operational readiness assessment and the commitment of the African Union to reconfigure the force to strengthen support for the implementation of the transition plan, which is informed by the recently revised concept of operations. I encourage the Federal Government, AMISOM and international partners to coordinate fully and to ensure that adequate resources are provided for both AMISOM and the Somali security forces to enable the implementation of the transition plan and set the conditions for the handover of security responsibility from AMISOM to the Somali security forces.

94. Meanwhile, the progress made by the Somali Government to build a track record of reforms under the IMF staff-monitored programme is encouraging. I welcome the IMF review, which concluded that progress had been made towards the benchmarks required for Somalia to obtain debt relief under the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiative, and the support of the World Bank and the European Union. These are signs of growing confidence in the financial management of the Government. I encourage the Federal Government to continue on this path and to foster economic cooperation with the federal member states, to tackle corruption, to maintain efforts to improve security across the country and to demonstrate that continued economic progress can also help move political dialogue forward.

95. Somalia continued to struggle with enormous humanitarian and socioeconomic challenges. The ongoing vulnerability perpetuates humanitarian needs, particularly for internally displaced persons and marginalized communities. Sustained, early and long-term financial support are critical in 2019 and beyond. This support will ensure that life-saving aid is complemented with predictable support to Somali communities for resilience-building and recovery. I call on donors to consider contributing to the 2019 humanitarian response plan and to boost investment in resilience-building efforts.

96. The imposition of taxation and other fees on United Nations personnel, consultants and contractors by the Federal Government risks making United Nations operations in Somalia, including the delivery of support to AMISOM and the Somali national army, more difficult. I urge Somali authorities to address any outstanding matters related to the status-of-mission agreement through the established mechanisms.

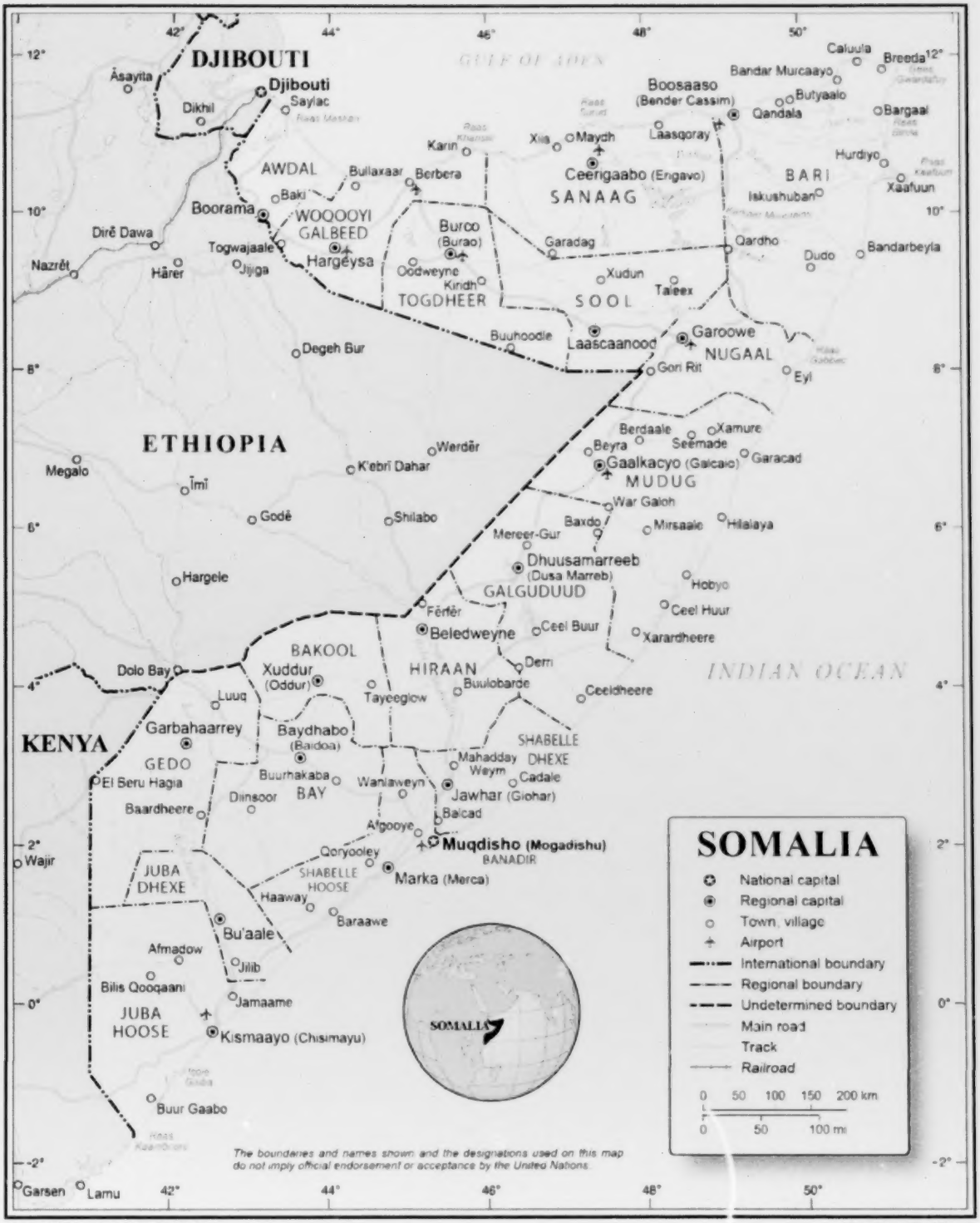
97. The accession by Somalia to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and Somalia's election to the Human Rights Council in October constitute key developments. According to General Assembly resolution 60/251, "members elected to the Council shall uphold the highest standards in the promotion and protection of human rights". Somalia's membership in the Council should therefore provide the impetus to strengthen national protection mechanisms, including addressing the establishment of the national human rights commission. I reiterate the need to complete the legislative framework to address sexual offences, including the sexual offences bill, which enjoys significant support from women parliamentarians and civil society. I note with concern the continued violations against freedom of expression, which could increase in the elections period, and I urge all actors to respect the rule of law throughout the upcoming electoral processes.

98. I remain concerned about civilian casualties and urge all parties to respect international human rights law and international humanitarian law in the conduct of hostilities. Although the incidents of violations against children attributed to Somali security forces have been on the decrease, cases of children used by Somali security forces are still being recorded. I call on the Federal Government of Somalia to adopt a zero-tolerance policy towards the use of children as vehicle escorts and to man checkpoints of security forces.

99. The changing political dynamics in the Horn of Africa hold promise for Somalia, which stands to benefit from closer regional cooperation. Effective transboundary water management is essential for the country to move away from recurring humanitarian crises towards resilience and recovery, as elaborated in the recovery and resilience framework and the national development plan. Closer cooperation in the borderlands of the regions also holds potential for economic growth, peacebuilding and stabilization, as the informal cross-border movement of goods and people could be integrated into formal economic systems and better monitored for illicit activities.

Such cooperation is also important for improving security and social services for populations that have long been marginalized.

100. I commend my Special Representative Nicholas Haysom, my Deputy Special Representatives and the dedicated and courageous staff members of UNSOM, UNSOS, the United Nations funds, programmes and specialized agencies and other international and regional organizations in Somalia for their continued hard work under challenging conditions. I thank the African Union, AMISOM, IGAD, the European Union, Member States, non-governmental organizations and other development partners for their sustained support in building lasting peace, stability and prosperity in Somalia.



Map No. 3690 Rev. 10.2 UNITED NATIONS
May 2014

Department of Field Support
Cartographic Section